

Every Child Learning Every Day



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An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education

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READY TO LEARN

Try exploring these titles

By Dr. Stan Steiner

January brings renewal for adults and more exploration for children.

This year make reading good books with kids a priority. The exploration from children will come naturally as a result of your efforts.

"Art Up Close From Ancient to Modern,"

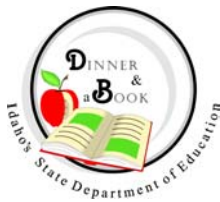
by Claire d'Harcourt, 2000/2003, Chronicle Books.

This amazing book is an art lesson, history lesson, and observation skill lesson all in one. The oversized book format is great for lap or table top reading.

Baby Love Series, published by Dorling Kindersley, 2003. This charming series with titles "I Can Smile at You," "I See Clouds in the Sky," "I Like My Soft Teddy Bear," and "I Feel Soft and Smooth" are terrific for adults interacting and reading with babies.

"I'm Still Here in the Bathtub: Brand New Silly Dilly Songs," by Alan Katz, 2003, McElderry Books. This sequel is just as silly and fun as the first book, "Take Me Out of the Bathtub." These songs are guaranteed to get participants.

Dr. Stan Steiner teaches Children's Literature at Boise State University. Find more book reviews at <http://education.boisestate.edu/ssteine>.



Making Children's TV more meaningful

Dear Reader:

If you are like many parents, grandparents, and others who work with young children, you may have a love/hate relationship with television.

On one hand, an engaging television program can support learning (and keep children occupied.)

On the other hand, children can quickly develop a television habit that robs time from other activities such as physical or imaginary play, reading books, coloring, and so on.

The challenge for adults is to find programs that are "educational" and also limit the time children spend passively in front of the TV set.

Idaho's families and early child educators have a great partner in managing this balancing act: Idaho Public Television.

I have been a long-time supporter of public television and the quality children's programs it has broadcast for years.



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

For many children, watching "Sesame Street," is a great introduction to learning about letters and numbers and other pre-literacy skills in a

way that is fun.

Those who watch "Dragon Tales," learn about decision making and problem solving, as well as some great songs and physical activities.

Other programs introduce children to foreign cultures, new books, and our own history.

In addition to quality programming, are exceptional materials for parents and teachers the station provides on its website: <http://www.idahoptv.org/kids/> under the "For grownups" section.

Here adults can find lessons, activities, and other suggestions to help you capitalize on the lessons being taught in programs and to make TV less a passive experience and more one that connects the child to the world.

Marilyn Howard

READY TO LEARN

Activities help promote word understanding

To help children develop an understanding of what a word is, try this game.

Choose one line from a favorite story or poem and write the word on an index card.

Assign each word to a different child.

Have the children practice saying their words one at a time, a little faster each time.

When they can say these words so that their sentence sounds like the original sentence, then it's time to mix them up!

For example, select seven children to join you. Have the children face the rest of the children in circle. Tell each child, "Your word is ____."



The children can practice saying their words in order. "Five little monkeys jumping on

the bed."

Have the children move in a new order and say their words.

"Little five on monkeys bed jumping."

Finally, have the children return to the original sequence, and say the original sentence.

"Five little monkeys jumping on the bed."

Another activity to help promote understanding of words is "Clap and Count."

ON THE WEB

Back issues of the Every Child Learning Every Day Early Childhood Newsletter are available at the "Parents" section on the State Department of Education's website www.sde.state.id/dept.

In this activity, the adult repeats a sentence or phrase and asks the children to count the words they hear.

The teacher says each sentence once, and says it again clapping each word, before asking the children to join in clapping and counting the words in each sentence. Use very short sentences to teach this skill.



RESOURCES

Shriners provide specialized medical care

Shriners Hospitals for Children is a network of pediatric specialty hospitals, that provide no-cost orthopaedic and burn care to children younger than 18.

There are 18 orthopaedic Shriners Hospitals, three Shriners Hospitals dedicated to treating children with severe burns, and one Shriners Hospital that provides orthopaedic, burn and spinal cord injury care.

Shriners Hospitals are located throughout North America — 20 in the United States and one each in Mexico and Canada.

There is never a charge to the patient, parent, or any third party for any service or medical treatment received at Shriners Hospitals.

Shriners Hospitals accept and treat children without regard to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

Any child may be eligible for treatment at a Shriners Hospital if the child is under 18 and if, in the opinion of the hospital's chief of staff, the child has an orthopaedic or burn condition that Shriners Hospitals can help.

All of the orthopaedic hospitals are equipped and staffed to treat children with congenital orthopaedic deformities, problems resulting from orthopaedic injuries, and diseases of the musculoskeletal system.

Three of the orthopaedic hospitals (in Chicago, Philadelphia and Sacramento) also have special programs dedicated to caring for children with spinal cord injuries.

The hospitals closest to Idaho include: Shriners Hospital Intermountain in Salt Lake City, Utah; Shriners Hospital-Spokane, Wash.; and Shriners Hospital-Portland, Ore.

Individuals who know a child that the Shriners Hospitals may be able to help, may call toll-free 1 (800) 237-5055 or visit the website at www.shrinershq.org.



Many child care centers and child care providers are participants of the special government program called the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP assures that meals and snacks served to your child meet government nutrition guidelines for healthful eating. You can relax, knowing that your child can eat in a healthful way.

NUTRITION

Program promotes nutritious meals

What can you expect? If your child is 3 to 5 years old, here is what a CACFP meal or snack provides:

Breakfast

¾ cup milk
½ cup juice, fruit or vegetables
1 child-size portion bread, cereal, rice, or noodles

Lunch or supper

¾ cup milk
2 (1/4 cup) servings of juice, fruit, or vegetables
1 child-size portion of meat or alternate (meat, poultry, fish, cheese, egg, cooked beans or peas, peanut butter, yogurt, or other protein food)

tein food)

Snacks: two of any of these foods:

½ cup milk
½ cup portion juice, fruit, or vegetables
1 child-size portion bread, cereal, rice or noodles
1 child-size snack portion of meat or meat alternate.

For more about CACFP meals and snacks:

Talk to day care staff. Some families qualify for free or reduced-price meals and snacks. **Check the web sites:** www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/

READY TO LEARN

Building a child's mind? Start with blocks

Blocks are simple toys that provide loads of learning opportunities. The next few issues of "Every Child Learning Every Day" will detail the value of block play with excerpts from National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) article.

Part 1: Block basics

Unit blocks may not be as sophisticated as some toys available today, but they are ideal for learning because they involve the child as a whole — the



way he moves his muscles, the way he discovers how different objects feel in his hands, the way he thinks about spaces and shapes, and the way he develops thoughts and interests of her own.

Unit blocks vary in name and material by manufacturer, but they are all based on the proportions 1:2:4.

These blocks must be sturdy and accurately cut so that children of all different ages and levels of learning may use them to create, solve problems, and challenge themselves.

More information about the NAEYC is available at www.naeyc.org.

ACTIVITIES

Points to ponder in picking puzzles for preschoolers

From Iowa State University

As in choosing any toy for preschoolers, a good general rule for puzzles is "start simple and work up from there."

An inexperienced or unskilled child can become frustrated by too many pieces or pieces that are too small.

A simple first puzzle may consist of one piece that fits into a cut out slot and some have handles to help clumsy hands.

A good place to start is with single pieces. But it is important to add more complicated puzzles only after the

child has practiced the necessary skills.

Puzzle patterns should be simple, familiar images — one large kitty or bunny. It is easier to put a puzzle together if you have a mental image of what the finished product looks like.

Older preschoolers may become interested in abstract free form designs, but these may be very difficult and require some initial help from you.

Another key quality for preschooler's puzzle is sturdiness. A favorite approach of the novice puzzle solver is to push and jam pieces together. Pieces that break easily are frustrating.

You can increase the life of a

puzzle by providing the proper storage space. You can neatly stack wooden board puzzles.

Use small, individual boxes or coffee cans and plastic containers for other types of puzzles.

Preschoolers enjoy personalized puzzles. It is easy to glue photographs onto heavy cardboard and cut them into simple, personal puzzles.

Another way to personalize puzzles is to select them on a child's favorite theme, such as animals construction equipment.

If your preschooler is interested in a special subject, you can hunt for magazine pictures that can be made into puzzles.